



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #17-01 **REVISED**

Effective Date: Upon Receipt

Issuance Date: September 14, 2016

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
DIRECTORS, LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

**FROM: TRACEY C. PALIATH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA, DHR
DEBBIE RUPPERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OES, DHMH**

Tracey Paliath
Debbie Ruppert

RE: Notification of Prekindergarten Eligibility

PROGRAM AFFECTED: ALL PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

On April 6, 2016, the Maryland Senate passed Bill 369, which requires Local Departments of Social Services and Local Health Departments to provide parents and guardians with written and oral notification that their 4-year-old child may be eligible for publicly funded prekindergarten. Prekindergarten helps children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary to be successful in school.

This AT has been revised to clarify that the customers targeted for notification are potentially eligible. The prekindergarten programs will make the full eligibility determinations.

TARGET POPULATIONS

Children targeted for receiving the notification are those who will be at least 4 years old by September 1 and have at least one of these qualifying factors:

- eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP)
- enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program
- receiving public assistance
- homeless
- receive special needs services
- in families with income less than 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Note: These are not the factors that determine if the child is eligible for prekindergarten services. Rather, these factors establish which children are to be targeted for potential enrollment by receiving a notice.

ACTION REQUIRED

The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood Development has designed a colorful flyer that is being mailed directly to each Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) and Local Health Departments (LHDs) with the names of publicly funded prekindergarten programs in that area. The flyer also states the eligibility rules and includes contact information.

Distribute this flyer to parents and guardians of four-year-old children when they visit the LDSS and LHD offices. Review the contents of the flyer with them so as to inform them that their child may have a right to attend pre-kindergarten at no cost for those who qualify.

In addition to local office staff distributing the flyers during office visits, in early July, DHR Central mailed a flyer to more than 13,000 FIA households whose children will be 4 years old by September 1. In August, DHMH sent flyers to 20,000 Medicaid households with child recipients under 185% FPL who will be 4 years old by September 1.

The legislation also requires that DHR and DHMH provide a report on the number of parents who were provided with a flyer and who subsequently enrolled in prekindergarten programs. MSDE, DHR, and DHMH are currently working on developing the methodology for meeting the reporting requirement.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving results for children and families.

INQUIRIES

For LDSS, please direct questions to Carrie Durham (carrie.durham@maryland.gov).
For LHDs, please direct questions to MCHP Policy (dhmh.mchppolicy@maryland.gov).

cc: DHR Executive Staff
MHBE Executive Staff
DHMH/OES Executive Staff
FIA Management Staff
DHR Constituent Services
DHR Call Center